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ABSTRACT

The Middle College High School (MCHS) in Tennessee is an alternative school located on the Shelby State Community College (SSCC) campus, designed to provide special counseling, college preparation, and access to SSCC facilities for potential high school dropouts who have the capacity for secondary and postsecondary success. The program, which was based on the LaGuardia Community College (LCC) Middle High School model, was intended to accommodate 100 sophomore-level students during its first year of operation, with an additional grade level to be added each subsequent year. The MCHS's curriculum was designed to ensure that students meet the new, more rigorous, fall 1989 admissions standards for Tennessee State Board of Regents (SBR) Colleges and Universities, as well as high school graduation requirements. A study was conducted to determine whether the MCHS was meeting its retention and college preparation goals after one semester. Study findings, based on first-term retention data, course enrollment information, national and state statistics on high school dropout rates, and data on LCC's Middle High School, included the following: (1) 95.5% of the 89 MCHS students completed the first semester; (2) MCHS's first-term retention rate was 10% higher than LCC's and 28.8% higher than the retention rate for sophomores for the state of Tennessee; and (3) 83% of the MCHS students were enrolled in math classes, 53% in social science classes, and 71% in foreign language classes to fulfill SBR admissions requirements. (EJV)

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TENNESSEE STATEWIDE SCHOOL-COLLEGE COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE: THE MIDDLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Emergence of Higher Education Specialization Seminar

by

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A Practicum presented to Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

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ABSTRACT

An assessment of the Middle College High School (MCHS) was conducted to determine if it was meeting its goals in student retention and high school unit completion for 1989 Admission to Tennessee public postsecondary institutions. The MCHS is an alternative school housed on the campus of Shelby State Community College (SSCC). The MCHS-SSCC Collaborative is a special project under the auspices of the Tennessee Statewide School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence. A replica of the LaGuardia Community College Middle High School model, its purpose is to reduce the high school dropout rate among students with postsecondary potential and to ensure that its graduates meet the new Fall, 1989 admissions standards for Tennessee State Board of Regents (SBR) institutions.

Results of the assessment revealed that MCHS had a retention rate 10 percent higher than the LaGuardia model, 41.5 percent higher than the City of New York, and 28.8 percent higher than the State of Tennessee during its first term of operation. Additionally, the results of the assessment revealed that MCHS students performed at a rate much higher than the State of Tennessee average in meeting the new 1989 high school unit requirements for college admission.

Recommendations derived from this study were: (1) begin replication of the MCHS-SSCC in the other three major

cities in Tennessee immediately; (2) conduct a five year retrospective study of MCHS graduates to determine the impact of the program and the critical factors in success or failure; and (3) conduct a more sophisticated comparative analysis of MCHS performance and impact on an annual basis.

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INTRODUCTION

In January, 1986 the State of Tennessee initiated a statewide School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence. Sponsored jointly by the Board of Regents of the State University and Community College System of Tennessee (SBR), The University of Tennessee (UT), State Board of Education (SBE), and the Memphis City Schools (MCS), the Collaborative focuses on strengthening the academic preparation of high school graduates and their success in bridging the transition from high school to college.

The Basic Academic Competencies and Subjects published in Academic Preparation for College describe what college students need to know and be able to do if they are to have a good chance of succeeding at college-level work. This publication of the College Board's Project EQuality provides a common working definition of "adequate academic preparation" which should be reflected both in high school and collegiate instructional programs. The endorsement of these competencies by all of Tennessee public education marks a definitive and positive upturn for the future of the State in its educational pursuits.

The Tennessee Collaborative launched several major projects designed to bring high school and college faculty and administrators together to work on common professional

tasks during its initial year. Collaboration might conceivably range from a single arrangement involving as few as two institutions bilaterally, to a complex arrangement involving a consortium of institutions. Both types of arrangements have occurred in the Memphis area under the overall umbrella of the Collaborative. These arrangements or collaboratives have made great strides over the life of their operation and have great promise for the future.

The Middle College High School (MCHS) is a collaborative project between Shelby State Community College (SSCC) and the Memphis City Schools. It is intended to 1) prevent students with postsecondary education potential from dropping out of high school and 2) ease in the transition into postsecondary education. The MCHS is a creative model designed to meet the needs of a group of high school students who could benefit from additional preparation for postsecondary educational experiences.

The national high school dropout rate is 27 percent and in some urban areas, particularly where new graduation requirements have been implemented, is exceeding 50 percent. Many talented students with college potential leave the secondary schools at an early age.

Although some reform is necessary within discrete institutions which comprise the layers of the education and training industry, experience with the early wave of school reform has demonstrated one point: Almost everyone who works in education perceives the industry as a series of

discreet institutions working in isolation from each other. Just as it is important to bridge the steps from elementary school to junior high school and then to senior high school, so too must education bridge the historic demarcation that separates the education world between secondary and post-secondary education. Reform within the layers of the education and training industry must be matched with reform between the layers--creative models to ease the transition from one layer to another. Such creative models must be a collaborative effort to help bridge the transition from one layer to another layer. These models must also provide equality of educational opportunity for those persons who could become dislocated because of environmental circumstances attributable to societal trends or because of increased educational requirements.

Access to higher education requires a prerequisite: graduation from high school. In that light, the high school dropout rate is a prime demographic statistic which causes great concern for all of higher education. There are three assumptions that direct the collaborative: Students are failing; high school test scores are declining; educators are failing to motivate and serve a neglected middle fifty percent (Parnell, 1985).

These issues and concerns laid the foundation upon which the Tennessee School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence is based. In anticipation of the Fall, 1989 change in admissions requirements for SBR

institutions, great emphasis has been placed on this project.

Therefore, the purpose of this practicum was to assess the Tennessee Statewide School-College Collaborative's MCHS to determine if it was meeting its goals after the first term of operation. This assessment involved a comparative analysis of the retention rate of MCHS with the state average, and the overall retention rate of the LaGuardia model. Additionally, an analysis was conducted to determine how well MCHS students were progressing toward meeting the 1989 SBR admissions standards as compared to the statewide statistics. The results of these analyses are presented below in the Results section of this practicum.

In view of the above, the importance of this evaluative practicum on the progress of the MCHS cannot be overemphasized. The assessment was carried out by collecting the appropriate data relative to MCHS's comparative retention rate, and the progress of its students in completing course work that will fulfill requirements for admission to SBR institutions in 1989. The essential tenets of the Context-Input-Process-Product (CIPP) Model for program evaluation (Isaac and Michael, 1981:6-20) were utilized to guide the assessment.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In 1971, Janet Lieberman and a special group of educators designed a Middle College, a collaborative high

school/college program directed to the needs of urban high school youth. Funded by grants from the Carnegie Corporation and the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, these educators planned Middle College from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, Middle College High School opened as an alternative high school under the joint auspices of the New York City Board of Education and LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York. As an alternative high school directing its efforts to the student dropout problem, LaGuardia's Middle College admits prospective tenth-grade students, who have been identified by teachers and counselors, as high-risk youngsters with college potential.

Despite the high risk nature of the student body, totaling approximately 460 students, about 85 percent graduate. And, of these, 75 percent go on to college at LaGuardia or elsewhere (Lieberman, 1986:54). Having received national acclaim and commendations, the City University of New York recently urged other units to replicate Middle College. Tennessee joined in this effort to replicate LaGuardia's Middle College and, at the same time, addressed a crucial local, state, and national problem--the high school dropout rate.

A primary emphasis of the collaborative is to mitigate the dropout rate and any potential adverse racial impact resulting from the new 1989 college admissions requirements. As has been emphasized by SBR strategic planning, the goals of improved quality and improved access

are not antithetical. Additional incentives, supportive to the Tennessee School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence, should have a positive impact on improving access to higher education from the secondary schools. Thus, it is this philosophical framework that provided the critical essential tenets inherent in the collaborative between MCHS and SSCC.

Wattenbarger and Kintzer (1985:iii) wrote that from a community college perspective, transfer education should be viewed as a vital relationship with both high schools and universities. As the intermediate unit in the total process, the two-year college must remain alert to the importance of maintaining close ties down the educational ladder as well as up. The college functions both as a receiving and a sending institution, and both roles are equally important.

The League For Innovation In The Community College (1987:3-12) cited school-college collaboration as one of the ways by which student success in college can be assured. Articulation and collaboration of high school curriculum planners as early as the eight grade will become widespread as more and more in the education industry recognize the worth of such arrangements.

The College Board publication Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need To Know And Be Able To Do (1983) provides a comprehensive listing and definition of the competencies that are required to be successful in

college. Not only does it contain the broad scope of quantitative and qualitative competencies desirable, but rather it includes detailed mapping of curricular unit requirements for high schools that conform to competencies expressed in college admissions standards and lower division collegiate course work.

It has been stated that because of deficits in our public school system, about one-third of our youth are ill-educated, ill-employed, and ill-equipped to make their way in American society. Some estimates of the number of functional illiterates in the United States puts this number at between 18 and 64 million. What is even more alarming is the growing number of high school dropouts. Parnell (1985) wrote about a neglected middle fifty percent of youth that public education has failed to motivate, serve, and guide along the path to a productive future.

Naisbitt (1984:26-27) cites the alarming high school dropout statistics in California as a major societal factor of great concern for the future. Chronic absenteeism is the symptom; dropping out is the result. The dropout rate increased 83 percent during the 1970s and now is three times the national average. For the first time in American history, the generation moving into adulthood is less skilled than its parents. This, all too clearly, sets the agenda for secondary and postsecondary education. School-College collaboration may not solve all of society's

problems, but measures of this type can play an important role in reducing the symptomatic ills of a nation at risk.

Partnerships with high schools on the preparatory edge are very much essential as high schools continue to release less-qualified graduates. Partnerships for academic curriculum planning, for example, can be a great deal of help. In California, a document prepared by academic senate representatives of the three public higher education segments outlines competencies expected of entering college freshmen in English and Mathematics. The document was designed to assist junior and senior high school teachers in curriculum development and to prepare students for a successful collegiate experience in these basic disciplines (Wattenbarger and Kintzer, 1985:19).

This practicum is related to the Emergence of Higher Education Specialization Seminar in that it focuses on the glaring problem of high school dropouts and inarticulation that has developed between high schools and colleges today. It is also related to the Specialization Seminar in that the MCHS experiment represents yet a new era in the emergence of higher education. That is, the type of school-college collaborative herein examined may signify the beginning of a new conceptualization of the nature, scope, and focus of higher education that will be instrumental in shaping scenarios of the future.

As previously mentioned, the MCHS is a creative model designed to meet the needs of a group of high school students who could benefit from additional preparation for postsecondary educational experiences. To this end, the MCHS assists students in meeting the Fall, 1989 admissions requirements for SBR institutions.

It is extremely important to point out that the following sub-divisions of this practicum are of vital importance to the reader. This is true to the extent that these sub-divisions contain details about the MCHS that support a greater understanding of the nature and focus of this collaborative.

MCHS Broad Objectives

The MCHS Goals are concisely expressed in four major subdivisions which undergird the conceptual framework in which this institution operates:

I. The Middle College High School is an exemplary academic collaborative between the Memphis City Schools and Shelby State Community College.

II. The major purposes of this college-high school partnership are to reduce the drop-out rate of students "at risk" and to promote academic excellence leading toward post-secondary educational placement.

III. The required curriculum and counseling support services intensify opportunities for student personal growth, career development, and academic achievement.

IV. Continuity between the high school and middle college curricula will promote placement in postsecondary institutions.

MCHS Student Goals

Specific goals were set for each MCHS student in accordance with the following program objectives:

1. Students who complete the MCHS program will earn the minimum twenty credits required for admission to an SBR college or university in Fall, 1989.

2. A higher proportion of MCHS graduates will have college-level skills by the end of the twelfth year of school in comparison to other MCS graduates.

3. The retention rate at MCHS will be higher than the average in the MCS.

4. Through career education and internships, students will acquire broad employability skills and life coping skills.

5. Specific, high goals will be set in all subject areas.

With respect to the development of college-level skills, it is expected that a high proportion of MCHS students will achieve Basic Academic Competencies outlined in Project Educational EQuality by the time they complete the third year of the program (12th grade). This will minimize the need for remediation in college, and as a result, remedial needs of MCHS entrants to SBR colleges and universities will be lower than that for the general population. While it is expected that a majority of MCHS students will complete the state and city requirements for the high school diploma, all students will be encouraged to achieve far beyond this minimum achievement level as time and talent permit.

The MCHS Logistical Setting

The MCHS is located on the SSCC Mid-Town Campus which affords it a unique and non-traditional setting. The SSCC Mid-Town Campus is located on 22-acre tract bounded by Union, Myrtle, Linden, and Manassas/Walnut streets in the heart of the Memphis Medical Center Complex and about a mile from the Mississippi River at the East end of historic Beale Street. Comprised of ten modern buildings, the Mid-Town Campus was specifically designed to optimize learning. Academic and student services administrative offices are housed at this location as well as a cafeteria, gymnasium, theatre and student activities center. Other features include a model day care center, the college library which is a branch of the Memphis and Shelby County Public Library and Information System, and an arboretum containing native Tennessee plant specimens.

The MCHS Selection Process

As previously indicated, MCHS targeted potential high school dropouts who, by various indicators, were determined to be "at risk" but who had the potential for secondary school completion and postsecondary school success. Therefore, a subcommittee was formed to determine criteria of eligibility for MCHS and the selection processes.

The initial findings of the subcommittee was that one group of students should be targeted as high risk for

potentially dropping out of school before graduation. The subcommittee also felt that a more detailed study of these students would be necessary before a conclusive decision could be reached. Such a study would require the examination of each student's permanent academic records and possibly interviews of the subjects and their families.

The subcommittee analyzed data for a group of students who failed to return to school for the 1985-86 school year but had attended the previous year. Utilizing available resources, this sample was refined until the committee felt comfortable that the remaining students were indeed dropouts. A total of 1,876 secondary students in the final sample were examined on eight variables available from the school system's computerized Student Master File.

This analysis revealed that the highest number of dropouts left school while in the ninth or tenth grade, that a majority of these students were Black, that a majority of them were male, that 71 percent were over the average age for their grade level (indicating failure of a earlier grade level), that half failed their current grade, that 10 percent were receiving resource services, that a third received free or reduced-price lunches indicating low family income, and that 45 percent had 12 or more absences during the previous school year.

The subcommittee concluded, based on the above information, that students who had failed a grade in school should be identified to receive dropout prevention assis-

tance and that of these students, exhibiting additional characteristics as noted, should receive highest priority in the selection process for MCHS.

A refinement of the subcommittee's findings resulted in the following selection criteria for MCHS:

Targeted Students: 100 Tenth Graders

1. High rate of absenteeism
2. Grade retention: One or more grades
3. Over age for current grade level
4. Minimum of four (4) units completed of high school work
5. Evidence of potential for success in high school and college.
6. Voluntary enrollment on the part of student
7. Parental approval and support
8. Recommendation from local school assessment team: teacher, counselor, principal

MCHS Staffing, Facilities, and Support Services

This unique institution required unique staffing. The teacher/advisor function within the staffing pattern helps to set the tone for the quality of support services designed. This function permits the needed monitoring for students, as well as offering a hands-on approach to on-going academic advising.

Special counselors address personal and career counseling needs. Social and psychological services are provided by Psychological Service Workers through the Memphis City Schools Mental Health Center. Initially, the

teacher/student and counselor/counselee ratio was to be 1:20 and 1:50, respectively, and was intended to accommodate 100 sophomore-level students. An additional grade level will be added each subsequent year, making the MCHS completely operational for all three years of senior high school by 1989--the same year in which the new admissions requirements for State Board of Regents Colleges and Universities become effective.

As students on the SSCC campus, the MCHS student has access to educational and recreational facilities as needed and is accorded the extra-curricular rights and privileges of any Shelby State Student, as determined appropriate. Similar privileges are also extended to the MCHS faculty and staff. In addition to the full-time teaching and counseling staff, the initial administrative structure consists of a principal and secretary.

Adequate classroom, laboratory and office facilities are designated on the Midtown Campus, positioned for co-mingling of students between SSCC and MCHS.

Deeply ingrained in the Middle College High School experiment is the philosophical assumption that the students selected have indicated high potential for secondary and postsecondary success, but have become dissatisfied with the "lock-step" rigidity of the high school environment. Dropping out is the result of that symptom; rebellion and non-conformance is the behavior pattern. Research on the LaGuardia model indicates that students of this type achieve

a significantly higher level academically when placed in a "more mature" environment such as that provided by SSCC. According to Liebermann (1986:48), the underlying education philosophy is based on the psychological truism that fifteen year-olds (the tenth grade students) have more in common with twenty year-olds than with twelve year-olds and should be allowed to make their own educational choices. However, MCHS students make those choices with guidance from a faculty counselor to ensure that they meet the necessary requirements for both secondary school graduation and college entrance.

The MCHS Curriculum

All of the above suggest that in the future American education must be viewed as "all one system" in order to bridge the gap that currently exists between the various layers of education. This, all too clearly, indicates that in this seamless web of education curricular concerns can no longer be compartmentalized. It must take into consideration the continuity of the educational process as a whole. This can not occur successfully except within an operational framework such as that inherent in the Tennessee School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence, and in efforts like the MCHS.

The new 1989 admissions standards for Tennessee SBR institutions are designed along the same pattern as some other states that have addressed the competencies needed for

success in college-level English and Mathematics courses. The Tennessee standards, however, address competencies needed not only in English and Mathematics, but include Social Studies, Natural Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and Foreign Languages in accordance with the specifications of the College Board's Project EQuality. To this end, the curricular design for the first term of the MCHS includes thirteen courses in seven academic areas. All courses meet the 1989 SBR Admissions Standards except Pre-Algebra which is provided for MCHS students especially weak in mathematics (Mitchell, 1987:2).

PROCEDURES

The assessment of the MCHS was performed utilizing data collected from several sources. These sources included first-term retention and specific course enrollment data from the Principal of MCHS, national statistics on high school dropout and retention rates from the publication All One System (Hodgkinson, 1985), and recent data on the completion rate of all Tennessee high schools compiled by the SBR. Additionally, the publication A Student Guide to Secondary Curriculum (Board of Education, 1986) was utilized as a check list to determine the differences in unit requirements for high school graduation and the 1989 admissions standards for SBR colleges and universities.

To determine if the MCHS was successful in retaining students, a comparison of the MCHS first-term dropout rate

with the statewide and national averages was conducted. A retention rate higher than that for the state or the nation was considered to be successful.

To determine if the MCHS students were making satisfactory progress toward meeting the 1989 admissions standards for SBR institutions, a comparison was made of the MCHS curriculum and the results of a transcript analysis for all Tennessee high schools provided by the State Board of Education and SBR. A percentage higher in any discipline for MCHS over the statewide average was considered to be satisfactory.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations to the study conducted must be noted. First, this study focused on a comparative analysis of the progress of students in a "special setting" with "special characteristics" to the progress of students in the typical Tennessee high school. Therefore, if it were possible to compare MCHS with a similar school in Tennessee, as is likely in the future, the results might be different. There exists no alternative control population from which to infer certain comparative features at this time. In this regard, the study is limited in that the results attained by MCHS cannot be generalized as a concise measurement tool for all of Tennessee secondary education.

Secondly, although the retention rate for MCHS compared favorably with that of the LaGuardia model, a basic

limitation of this analysis lies in the fact that MCHS was evaluated only on one term of attendance. The retention rate for the LaGuardia model encompasses a longer period of analysis. The results might be different if data were available to compare MCHS with the LaGuardia model over a longer period of time. However, the fact remains that the MCHS experiment has proven to be a success story in its first term of implementation, and has inspired many other school systems to begin replication in the near future.

Basic Assumptions

It was assumed that students having the same general characteristics as those in the LaGuardia model would achieve in a similar excellent manner when the same conditions were replicated. It was also assumed that subjects in this study were reasonably homogeneous as determined by selection criteria. Additionally, all of the MCHS students were assumed to be homogeneous with respect to socioeconomic, cultural, and educational values in an urban setting.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided to eliminate any ambiguity that may unintentionally exist in the study:

Admissions Standards - The set of qualifications, including high school units, that one must have for admission to a college or university.

Alternative School - A special high school designed to meet the peculiar needs and interests of high school students that cannot be met in a regular public high school.

Articulation Agreement - An agreement between two or more institutions as to course content, credit, and transferability.

At Risk Student - a student who possesses any of the characteristics common to those who are most likely to discontinue enrollment.

Collaborative - a cooperative arrangement between two or more institutions for the attainment of common goals.

Dropout - a student whose enrollment is interrupted.

Retention - the continuous, uninterrupted enrollment of a student.

RESULTS

A profile of the headcount enrollment data collected on MCHS students is presented in below. These data represent the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled and gross and net enrollment data from which the retention rate was computed.

Table 1

Enrollment and Membership Data on MCHS

Race	Gross Enrollment	Net Enrollment Boys	Girls	Total
White	18	11	7	18
Black	71	38	29	67
Total	89	49	36	85

The results of the comparative analysis of MCHS enrollments with those of the LaGuardia model, the State of Tennessee, and the City of New York are presented in the following tables. The numbers in parentheses represent the percentage of retention less than the MCHS retention percentage. The numbers not in parentheses represent the actual percentage rate at which students were retained.

Table 2

Comparative Retention Data for Middle College High School The LaGuardia Model, The City of New York and The State of Tennessee

Institution, City or State	Retention Rate	Percent Plus or minus MCHS
MCHS	95.5	
LaGuardia Model	85.5	(10)
City of New York	54.0	(41.5)
State of Tennessee	66.7	(28.8)

The results presented in Table 2 above are interpreted to indicate that the MCHS retained students in the first term of operation at a far greater rate than the average for the LaGuardia Model. Additionally, the results are interpreted to indicate that the MCHS retained students at a rate 28.8 percent higher than the State of Tennessee, and at a rate 41.5 percent higher than the City of New York.

MCHS Progress Toward Completion of New Fall, 1989 Admissions Requirements for State Board of Regents Institutions

The requirements for graduation from the Memphis City Schools with the general diploma differ from the Fall, 1989 admissions requirements for SBR institutions. These differences occur in the four disciplines of Mathematics, Social Studies, Visual/Performing Arts, and Foreign Languages. An analysis of enrollments of MCHS students in these MCS graduation requirements and SBR admissions requirements is presented in Table 3 below. It should be noted that Table 3 contains information only in the subject areas where differences occur. Total unit requirements for high school graduation with the general diploma (20) are not shown. Numbers in parentheses represent the percentage of total MCHS enrollments in the indicated subject areas.

Table 3

MCHS Student Progress Toward High School Graduation
And SBR 1989 Admissions Requirements

Subject	Requirement: High School Graduation	Requirement: SBR Admission	MCHS Headcount Enrollment
Mathematics	2	3	74 (83)
Social Studies	1 1/2	2	47 (53)
Foreign Languages	0	2	63 (71)
Visual/Performing* Arts	0	1	0 (0)

*visual or performing arts not scheduled for first term.

The results presented in Table 3 are interpreted to indicate that 83 percent of MCHS students needed and were enrolled in Mathematics, 53 percent in Social Studies, 71 percent in Foreign Languages, and none in Visual/Performing Arts, respectively. No visual/performing arts were offered in the MCHS schedule of courses during its first term of operation. However, it is scheduled for the second semester and a representative proportion of the student body is expected to enroll.

Data on Tennessee statewide enrollments furnished by the SBR indicate that if the new 1989 admissions standards were in effect today, unit deficiencies would certainly exist. The results of a Fall, 1987 transcript audit of first-time freshmen (State Board of Regents, 1988:3)

indicate that Social Studies and Foreign Languages are the areas in which the highest rate of deficiencies exist. Only 65 percent and 51.5 percent in Social Studies and Foreign Languages, respectively would have been eligible for admission if the new standards were in effect. All too clearly, when these figures are compared to the percentages attained by MCHS in its first term of operation, it may be concluded that MCHS graduates will be well-qualified for admission to Tennessee colleges and universities by Fall, 1989.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Educational reform is on the national agenda, and the State of Tennessee is on the cutting edge of such reform in several major areas. Because Tennessee ranks 45th in the nation in retaining students through high school is of prime importance. We are just entering an era in which youth will be in short supply, and the supply of well-prepared youth is in even shorter supply. The task of education will be not to lower standards but to increase the effort. High Schools and Colleges must network and establish cooperative efforts like the Middle College High School to ensure a brighter future for all of society.

The data presented on the progress of the MCHS with respect to reducing the high school dropout rate is a very positive indicator that the project has great value. Already the retention rate is at a soaring level when

compared to other Tennessee high schools and the original LaGuardia model. The data presented on the progress of MCHS students toward meeting the new Fall, 1989 admissions standards for Tennessee colleges and universities may be interpreted to mean that college attendance is virtually assured.

By implementing the MCHS collaborative project, a new intervention program for capable but dropout-prone high school students is available. Operated as a comprehensive high school, MCHS currently provides tenth graders with instruction, counseling, and internship opportunities that should not only prevent their potential attrition from schooling, but should also encourage their participation in postsecondary education. It is intended that the MCHS will grow to a student body population of approximately three hundred as 11th and 12th grades are added over the next two years. Additionally, it is expected that greater opportunities will exist for ensuring postsecondary success of MCHS students as arrangements are solidified for cross enrollment of these students in SSCC courses and extracurricular programs.

The recommendations derived from this study were as follows:

1. Begin replication of the MCHS experiment in the three other major cities in Tennessee immediately.

2. Conduct a five year retrospective study of MCHS graduates to determine the impact of the program and the critical factors in success or failure.
3. Conduct a more sophisticated comparative analysis of MCHS performance and impact on an annual basis.

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